



## Disneyland Comes to Alviso

Posted by **Pierluigi Oliverio** on Monday, June 02, 2008

### City Hall Diary

Disneyland in Alviso? Not quite, but the comparisons are definitely there.

Several months back, I accompanied Councilmembers Chu and Liccardo on a tour of the San Jose Water Pollution Control Plant. We rode on electric carts that were linked together like those at an amusement park. Our tour guide spouted off words like, "sewage back-up, micro-organisms, aeration, methane gas"—much different then "Pirates of the Caribbean."

The facility itself is quite large (2,600 acres) and old (built in 1956). The tour included the carts going from different facilities and walking down into the bowels of some of the buildings. San Jose could easily rent this space to the maker of a horror movie since these basements were eerie. Some of the rooms looked like scenes from a large naval ship, with long dark hallways and big pipes running overhead. Down below, we were able to view wiring that is 20–40 years old; life expectancy of the wiring is only 25 years.

This facility treats over 110 million gallons of water each day to serve 1.4 million residents in eight cities. The water that we flush from our toilets travels north to the plant where it goes through a series of phases. The finished product is clean water that flows to the bay. Also, "recycled water" can be pumped back out to the city through "purple pipes" to manage industrial and irrigation needs. In some cities it becomes drinking water. I am leaving out a lot of detail on all the phases since this would get too wordy, and I must leave you with some mystery.

You may actually tour the plant yourself! The city offers a two-hour free tour on Saturdays. You may choose 9–11a.m. or 1:00–3:00 p.m. The remaining dates available are June 7, July 12, August 2, and September 6. Call 408.975.2551 to sign up or email [carolina.camarena@sanjoseca.gov](mailto:carolina.camarena@sanjoseca.gov).

The San Jose Water Pollution Control Plant is an important facility. Although many people may not realize it, the plant is an important part of San Jose government. We would quickly forget about any other city issues we discuss on this blog if in the future we were told we could not flush our toilets.

I support investing in the infrastructure so that we can continue to rely on this resource. Water will continue to be a scarce resource locally and globally; therefore, San Jose should take advantage of this unique opportunity to be in the driver's seat with a leading-edge Water Pollution Control Plant by making capital investments today.

I encourage you to stop and have lunch in Alviso (before or after the tour) and enjoy your own "Bay Area Backroads" experience.

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